



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **Los Angeles man charged for attempting to ship sensitive technology to Iran** ***Joint ICE-FBI probe uncovers scheme involving illegal export of pressure sensors***

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles man was arraigned in federal court here yesterday for his role in a scheme to illegally export more than 100 Honeywell sensors to Iran in violation of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). According to the manufacturer, the sensors, which detect the pressure of liquid or gas, could potentially be used to detonate explosive devices.

Mohammad Fazeli, 27, was arrested March 16 at his Los Angeles apartment by agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Fazeli was named in a three-count indictment handed down March 9 charging him with violating the IEEPA, conspiracy, and making false statements.

The indictment alleges that Fazeli ordered 103 pressure sensors in September 2004 through a website operated by an electronics company based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. According to the indictment, Fazeli told an unindicted co-conspirator that he had been contacted by a representative from that company advising him that he needed a license in order to export the devices. Despite that, after receiving the parts, Fazeli allegedly attempted to send them to the United Arab Emirates, with the understanding that the devices would ultimately be shipped to Iran.

Under the IEEPA, Iran has been subject to a trade embargo by the United States since the late 1970s. The Iranian Transactions Regulations expressly prohibit the sale, supply, or transshipment of any goods, technology, or services to Iran without prior authorization by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control. Investigators say Fazeli had not received the required prior approval from the Treasury Department to export the pressure sensors.

"One of ICE's top enforcement priorities is preventing terrorist groups and hostile nations from illegally obtaining U.S. military products and sensitive technology," said Kevin Kozak, deputy special agent in charge for ICE investigations in Los Angeles. "In the wrong hands, components like these pressure sensors could be used to inflict harm upon America or its allies."

"The charges in this case are a result of the hard work of committed agents from separate agencies working toward the same goal of preventing the illegal export of a potentially harmful device," said J. Stephen Tidwell, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI in Los Angeles.

Fazeli, who remains free on \$50,000 bond, is scheduled to go on trial April 25.

ICE's Arms and Strategic Technology Investigations (ASTI) Unit is responsible for investigating the illegal export of U.S. military products and sensitive technology. In fiscal year 2004, ICE's ASTI Unit worked on more than 2,500 such investigations.

Just last week a federal jury in San Diego found Arif Ali Durrani guilty of multiple violations of the Arms Export Control Act for illegally exporting military aircraft parts from the United States to the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, and Belgium. At the trial, ICE agents testified that many of the military components in Durrani's illegal export plot were ultimately destined for Iran.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*